

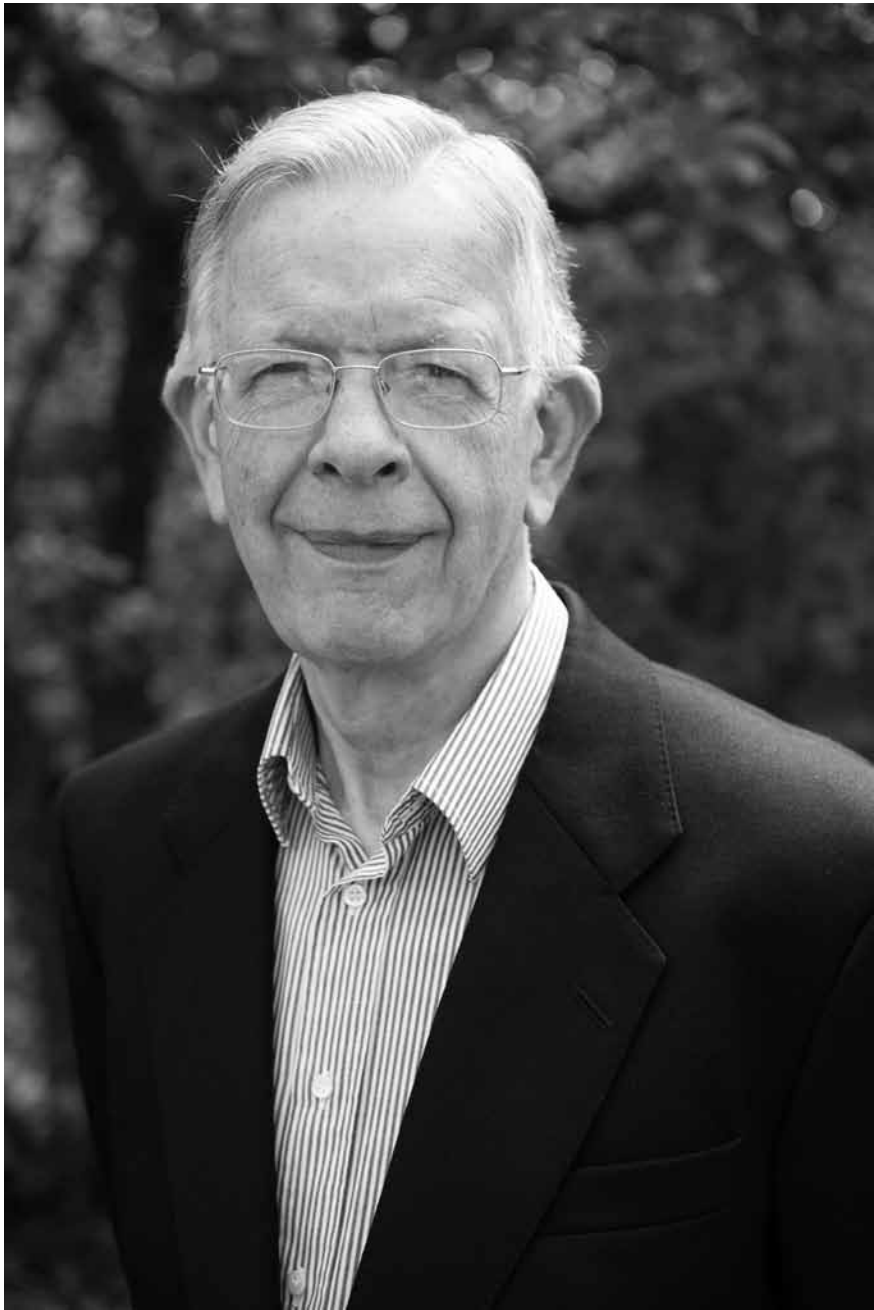
MISSION *in* CONTEXT



Explorations inspired by
J. Andrew Kirk

Edited by John Corrie and Cathy Ross

MISSION IN CONTEXT



Frontispiece J. Andrew Kirk

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Mission in Context

Explorations Inspired by J. Andrew Kirk

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*To Andrew,
with grateful thanks
from all your friends in this book.*

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He had material published in *Theology*, *Mission Studies* and the *International Review of Mission*, among other journals. Rowan Williams described his Grove booklet *Beyond Tragic Spirituality: Victimhood and Christian Hope* as ‘a first class essay on a difficult subject . . . What you have written will be of lasting value’. His last publication was: *Western Culture in Gospel Context: Towards the Conversion of the West – Theological Bearings for Mission and Spirituality* (Wipf and Stock, Cascade, 2011). He died on 11 March 2011.

Daniel Kirk is the eldest of three children born to Andrew and Gillian Kirk in Buenos Aires, Argentina. After finishing a degree in Comparative American Studies at Warwick University he participated in the Christian social project Armonía working in slums on the west side of Mexico City. Daniel spent six years in Mexico where he taught English and did a Master’s in Latin American Studies. Back in the UK he worked for Latin Link and studied an MA in Biblical Interpretation at the London School of Theology. With his wife Ellelein and their firstborn son David, Daniel went with SAMS (now CMS) to Chile in 2005. He has been involved in pastoral work in Viña del Mar and the training of lay leaders in Chile’s fifth region. He is currently doing a doctorate through Spurgeon’s College, London.

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C. René Padilla was born in Quito, Ecuador, and reared in Bogotá, Colombia. He has been living in Buenos Aires, Argentina, since 1967. He received a BA, an MA, and an honorary DD from Wheaton College, and a PhD from the University of Manchester, England. He is a founding member of the Latin American Theological Fellowship (FTL, its acronym in Spanish) and of the Kairos Foundation in Buenos Aires, Argentina. For 12 years he was the International President of Tearfund – UK and Ireland. He is currently President of the Micah

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Dr Parush R. Parushev is Bulgarian and an ordained Baptist minister. He is currently Pro-Rektor/Academic Dean, Senior Lecturer in Theology, Department Head of the Post-graduate Studies and Director of the Institute for Systematic Studies of Contextual Theologies, at the International Baptist Theological Seminary of the EBF Prague, Czech Republic. He is also a faculty member of the Bulgarian Evangelical Theological Institute in Sofia and of the California Christian College, USA, and he teaches theology, philosophy and ethics. He is an author and co-editor of several books and has published a number of academic works in science and theology.

Dr Peter Penner was born in the Soviet Union and grew up in Germany. For the last 19 years he has been involved in a variety of educational ministries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. His primary focus of research is in theological education and mission. He is presently the European Vice President of TCMI Institute in Austria, training men and women for ministry in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Vinoth Ramachandra lives in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and has an international ministry as the Secretary for Dialogue and Social Engagement with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. He is the author of several essays and books, which include *The Recovery of Mission: Beyond the Pluralist Paradigm* (Eerdmans and Paternoster, 1996) and *Subverting Global Myths: Theology and the Public Issues shaping Our World* (IVP Academic and SPCK, 2008).

Cathy Ross comes from Aotearoa/New Zealand where she completed an MA in French and German from Auckland University before studying with her husband at All Nations Christian College in UK. Cathy and her family have worked in Rwanda, Congo and Uganda as mission partners with NZCMS. From 1998 to 2005 she worked at the Bible College of New Zealand as the Director of its School of Global Mission. After that she managed the Crowther Centre for Mission Education at CMS and was the J.V. Taylor Fellow of Missiology at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford. Her recent publications are *Women with a Mission: Rediscovering Missionary Wives in Early New Zealand* and *Mission in the 21st Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission*, co-edited with Andrew Walls. Her current research is looking at hospitality as a metaphor for mission. She is currently Tutor in Contextual Theology at Ripon College, Cuddesdon and Lecturer in Mission at Regent's Park College, Oxford.

Wilbert R. Shenk served in Indonesia from 1955 to 1959. He was administrative director of Overseas Ministries, Mennonite Board of Missions from 1965 to 1990. From 1990 to 1992 he spent six months of each year with the British Gospel and Our Culture Programme, and from 1990 to 1995 was associate professor of mission studies at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. He joined the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary's School of Intercultural Studies in 1995 as professor of mission history and contemporary culture. Among his books are *Write the Vision: The Church Renewed* (1995), *Changing Frontiers of Mission* (1999), and an edited volume, *North American Foreign Missions: Theology, Theory, and Policy* (2004).

Andrew F. Walls is a graduate of the Universities of Oxford and Aberdeen. He served in Sierra Leone and Nigeria, and was for many years Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, before becoming founding Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh. From 1997 to 2001 he was Guest Professor of Ecumenics and Mission at Princeton Theological Seminary. He is General Editor of the Methodist Missionary History Project. Currently he serves as Honorary Professor in the University of Edinburgh, Professor of the History of Mission at Liverpool Hope University, Professor at the Akrofi-Christaller Institute in Ghana and Research Professor at Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya.

Christopher J.H. Wright was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. His doctorate from Cambridge is in Old Testament ethics. He taught in India from 1983 to 1988, and then at All Nations Christian College, where he was Principal from 1993 to 2001. He is now the International Director of the Langham Partnership International, which provides literature, scholarships and preaching training for Majority World pastors and seminaries. His books include *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*, *The Mission of God* and *The Mission of God's People*.

Hwa Yung is presently the Bishop of the Methodist Church in Malaysia. Before this, he was the Principal of Malaysia Theological Seminary, and then the Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia, Trinity Theological College, Singapore. He also serves on the Council of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies and the Board of the Lausanne Movement. He has written much in the area of Asian theology and missiology.

Foreword

Christopher J.H. Wright

1974 was a great year. It was, of course, the year of the first great Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization (which I was aware of but did not attend). It was also the year that I first heard of Andrew Kirk. Both things were part of significant shaping and direction in my life. At the time I was in the middle of my own doctoral research in Cambridge, studying the economic ethics of the Old Testament. Although this meant a lot of research in obscure journals of ancient Near Eastern law and struggling to make headway in a discipline (Old Testament Ethics) that had virtually no existence at the time, it did mean that I was daily exposed to the message of God's Word about issues of justice, poverty, debt, land, family – and the whole range of economic concerns in the Old Testament law, narratives, prophets, Psalms and Wisdom. The soil of my own biblical and theological convictions was being well dug in preparation for missional seeds to be sown.

For a few years in the mid-1970s I served as the Secretary for the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research – a volunteer job that in those years was often shouldered by some willing young researcher at Tyndale House, as I was. One of the jobs was to produce a newsletter with input from members. I remember being challenged by a letter from Andrew, who by then had been working in Argentina for about six years. He passionately called on fellow members of the Tyndale Fellowship: a) to connect their theological study and writing to the practical realities of the world, including especially the contexts of oppression and poverty and b) to consider leaving the comfort and kudos of teaching in the West to come and teach in the Third World (as it was still called in those days). Life was much more real and exciting there, the needs were far greater, and the theological task was far more demanding. Both of these challenges struck a chord in my own heart, encouraging me on the one hand to press forward with my own biblical studies in an applied (missional and ethical) way, and leading, on the other hand, to a period of teaching the Old Testament in India in the 1980s.

When he returned to the UK, Andrew formed a small, informal group that, for want of any better name, he called exactly what it was, an Evangelical Study Fellowship for Mission. I had just finished my doctorate and was serving a curacy in the south of England, and Andrew invited me to join. We were a small group of men and women in a variety of professional callings who shared the excitement of the vision that had emerged from Lausanne 1974, of a holistic evangelical mission in which the Lordship of Christ claimed the whole of life, in which the gospel

addressed every dimension of brokenness, sin and evil in society as well as the individual heart, and in which the Bible must be brought into engagement with any and every aspect of our cultural context. John Stott (whom I met in person for the first time in 1978 – another good year) was our hero, with his authoritative leadership of a new era of evangelical engagement with social and cultural issues. But Andrew was more accessible (for me at that time), and led us in regular meetings where we studied the Bible together with mind-stretching application and shared papers in all kinds of issues from our backgrounds. I did not know the phrase ‘missional hermeneutics’ at the time, but that is what we were doing, and it was richly stimulating. Some of the seeds of a missional approach to the Bible, which eventually bore fruit in my book *The Mission of God*, were sown in my mind in those meetings.

That was the era, immediately post-Lausanne 1974, when there was an upsurge of evangelical re-engagement with society and culture, articulated for some of us in the birth of the magazine *Third Way*, which at that time attempted to bring a clearly and distinctively evangelical voice into the public arena of politics, economics, the law, music, media, the arts, literature, etc. The Lausanne Covenant was that magazine’s basis of faith then – though sadly it has now lost those roots and gone in a different direction. In Andrew’s case, it took the form of being the Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity – another product of John Stott’s passion that Christians should engage the whole of their cultural context with the truth of God’s revelation in Scripture and the implications of the Lordship of Christ.

That re-engagement was not without its controversies, of course. For about 15 years after Lausanne, the challenge that had been so forcefully set before the evangelical mission community by Rene Padilla and Samuel Escobar – that evangelism could not be divorced from committed engagement with issues of justice in contexts of oppression and poverty – led to a series of consultations on the relationship between these different dimensions of mission. Under the leadership of John Stott, these bore fruit in a brand of ‘Lausanne’ theology of mission that has remained holistic in its DNA, even though the controversies seem to continue long after the theology has largely been settled. In fact, in many ways it was only in the 1980s that the northern evangelical world began to catch up with what southern evangelicals had already been wrestling with since the late 1960s with considerable theological depth in the Latin American Theological Fraternity (FTL), of which Andrew was a founding member.

The FTL itself then emerged as a senior partner during the 1980s for another influential development, the formation of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT). This combined several continental theological networks in what was by then being called the Two-Thirds World. By then, I was teaching in India, but I was able to attend some of these consultations, including the one when INFEMIT was formally named as such, in Embu, Kenya, in 1987. It was through these connections that I made deep friendships with some of Andrew’s colleagues, Rene Padilla, Samuel Escobar, Pedro Arana – and several

other contributors to this volume. All this continued to shape and strengthen my own growth in commitment to missional and contextual understanding of the Bible and its relevance.

Mission in Context is the title of this book, and sparks the question, ‘What other kind of mission is possible?’. All mission, like all theology, happens in some context. The only question is whether those doing their theology or their mission are as self-consciously and self-critically aware of their own context and its impact upon them as they ought to be. The temptation for Western theologians has been to imagine that *we* have real theology and simple gospel mission. *Other people* have ‘contexts’, out of which come unfamiliar and uncomfortable ‘contextual theologies’ and rather compromised ‘contextual missiology’. Andrew was among the first who made me aware of what nonsense that is, and who inspired me to see theology and mission through other people’s eyes, to listen and learn more attentively, and to appreciate the kaleidoscopic richness of insights that God grants within the body of Christ through biblically faithful study embedded in, but transforming, any and every cultural context.

My own pilgrimage in theology has taken me through many international consultations (usually, in my experience, the smaller the better), within EFAC (the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion), the WEA-Missions Commission, and lately the Lausanne Theology Working Group. In all of these I have been enriched by the fellowship and insights of sisters and brothers from every continent – an experience first heralded to me by that letter from Andrew in the year of Lausanne 1974. My most recent experience of such international fellowship was in chairing the Statement Working Group for the Third Lausanne Congress in Cape Town, October 2010. The result of our work is *The Cape Town Commitment*. The second part of this document, ‘For the World We Serve: The Cape Town Call to Action’, touches on more than 30 different issues in our world, addressing them from the perspective of a biblical, evangelical, contextual and engaged missiology. The first part, ‘For the Lord We Love: The Cape Town Confession of Faith’, lays the foundations for such missional theology in the language of covenantal love – love for God, love for our neighbours in the world around us, love for one another – love which according to Jesus has the ‘primacy’ of being the first and greatest of God’s commandments and the finality of being among the last great missional commands he gave his disciples. Such integrated biblical love, it seems to me, integrates our biblical mission. If mission were conceived like a wheel, then the central hub must be driven by the engine of the love of God for his world and the good news of what God has done in Christ for the world’s salvation. But that is not the kind of centrality that makes everything else peripheral and therefore unimportant. Rather it is the nature of a wheel that the hub and the tyre (‘where the rubber hits the road’), are integrally part of each other and cannot function alone. A tyre without a hub has no connection with the engine – the transforming power of the gospel. A hub without a tyre has no connection with the road – the realities of the context.

I end, therefore, with a quotation from the closing section of Part 1 of *The Cape Town Commitment*, which expresses, I believe, something of the passion that Andrew Kirk has inspired and that is shared by the contributors to this Festschrift.

*The integrity of our mission.*¹ The *source* of all our mission is what God has done in Christ for the redemption of the whole world, as revealed in the Bible. Our evangelistic task is to make that good news known to all nations. The *context* of all our mission is the world in which we live, the world of sin, suffering, injustice, and creational disorder, into which God sends us to love and serve for Christ's sake. All our mission must therefore reflect the integration of evangelism and committed engagement in the world, both being ordered and driven by the whole biblical revelation of the gospel of God. 'Evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God ... The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world ... We affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and humankind, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ ... The salvation we proclaim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.'² 'Integral mission is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. If we ignore the world, we betray the Word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the Word of God, we have nothing to bring to the world.'³

We commit ourselves to the integral and dynamic exercise of all dimensions of mission to which God calls his Church.

- God commands us to make known to all nations the truth of God's revelation and the gospel of God's saving grace through Jesus Christ, calling all people to repentance, faith, baptism and obedient discipleship.

¹ Extract from *The Cape Town Commitment*, Part I.10b. The whole document can be read at www.lausanne.org/ctcommitment.

² *The Lausanne Covenant*, Paragraphs 4 and 5.

³ *The Micah Declaration on Integral Mission*.

- God commands us to reflect his own character through compassionate care for the needy, and to demonstrate the values and the power of the kingdom of God in striving for justice and peace and in caring for God's creation.
- In response to God's boundless love for us in Christ, and out of our overflowing love for him, we rededicate ourselves, with the help of the Holy Spirit, fully to obey all that God commands, with self-denying humility, joy and courage. We renew this covenant with the Lord – the Lord we love because he first loved us.

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Preface

It seems that Festschriften may be going out of fashion, so this book may be counter-cultural in the world of academia. We believe, however, that the tradition of honouring someone who has made a significant, lifelong contribution to a field of study deserves preserving. It should not be an occasion for mere hagiography. But it does give leading scholars who have been greatly influenced by the person concerned the opportunity to express the extent to which they have been inspired, and the space to make an original contribution to their field of study in the form of a chapter. This is a unique opportunity to bring together a wide range of scholarship, and although the chapters are inevitably diverse, taken together they make an important contribution to missiology as they dialogue with the thinking that has inspired them.

Andrew Kirk will be 75 in 2012 and he is still active in lecturing, travelling and writing. In 2011 he gained a PhD. He is regarded by many as a father figure, not only for the encouragement and inspiration he has given them personally, but for what he has contributed to the field of missiology down the years. His influence and reputation has become international, and has extended to South America, the United States, Eastern Europe, Africa and Southeast Asia. Some of his publications have been translated to extend their influence. Therefore we easily found a number of leading missiologists in many areas of the world whose respect for him and appreciation for his teaching and writing meant that they were delighted to accept our invitation to contribute to this volume.

Both of us have a personal stake in this volume, since we have known Andrew in different ways as a friend and colleague over many years and have come to appreciate and respect him for the huge influence he has had on our own thinking. Our prayer is that he may continue in God's gracious mercy to have an active writing and teaching ministry for some years to come and that this book may be superseded one day by a further set of reflections on all the new thinking which we are confident will have flowed from his pen in the intervening years.

John Corrie and Cathy Ross

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Introduction

John Corrie and Cathy Ross

Collections of essays can sometimes seem like a random and arbitrary mixed bag of themes with little coherence. In this volume however there is a thematic structure which hopefully brings the chapters together with a mutually reinforcing complementarity. They are reflections inspired by Andrew's writing and teaching, sometimes engaging with him in depth and sometimes taking his thinking as the jumping off point for further discussion. We begin in Part I with three contributions which put Andrew's life and work in the wider context of the places where he has taught and ministered and the main themes of his writing and teaching.

It seems to us that there are three main areas around which Andrew's theology revolves, and which therefore give coherence to the overall structure of this volume. The first concerns the nature of mission, and perhaps his book *What is Mission?* published in 1999,¹ has been most influential in this regard, along with its sequel *Mission under Scrutiny*, published in 2006.² The chapters in Part II are one way or another related to this theme. *What is Mission?* is of course the question at the heart of missiology, and it continues to provoke debate. Perhaps missiologists should heed David Bosch's advice that it is impossible adequately to answer the question, since mission is by its nature both multifaceted and contextual. Bosch's approach of holistic or integral mission has undoubtedly been influential on Andrew's own mission theology, but Andrew had adopted this way of thinking a long time before *Transforming Mission*,³ as his mission theology was forged in the crucible of his experience in Latin America in the 1970s.

The second main influence on Andrew's thinking is in the area of apologetics, epistemology and the nature of truth in a pluralistic world. The chapters in Part III are inspired by these themes. Andrew's thinking reached its highest point with the publication of *The Future of Reason, Science and Faith* in 2007,⁴ although he had already worked with Kevin Vanhoozer and others in grappling with issues

¹ J. Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission? Some Theological Explorations* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1999).

² J. Andrew Kirk, *Mission Under Scrutiny: Confronting Contemporary Challenges* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006).

³ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis, 1991).

⁴ J. Andrew Kirk, *The Future of Reason, Science and Faith: Following Modernity and Post Modernity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

of meaning and interpretation in a postmodern context.⁵ Andrew's involvement with epistemology and hermeneutics goes back to his engagement with Liberation Theology and the publications of his important contributions to this theme are widely acknowledged in this book.

The final cluster of chapters in Part IV revolve around the areas of culture, education and religion where again the themes of liberation, politics and contextualisation are not far away. This area of interest was nurtured by Andrew's involvement with the founding of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity as well as through his involvement with the Gospel and Culture movement. But these broad areas still do not adequately encompass the reach of Andrew's influence. He has made further important contributions to the debates about theological education, globalisation and Islam, and in most recent times he has developed this latter interest into a book which explores the 'clash of civilisations' theory of Samuel Huntington.⁶ It is a pity that we have not had opportunity to respond to this important development in this present volume.

Part I: J. Andrew Kirk: His Life and Work

Cathy Ross briefly surveys Andrew's career as a missiologist with the aid of a very helpful interview conducted with Andrew in 2010. She focuses on the breadth of Andrew's contributions to the field of missiology and explores some in further depth – especially apologetics, liberation theology and Andrew's thoughts on lay ministry. It is her firm conviction that Andrew is a profound scholar who truly does test all things and holds fast to what is good.

Daniel Kirk, one of Andrew's sons, who at present has a teaching and training ministry in Chile, offers an affectionate and personal biography which has many fascinating insights into Andrew as a person and his pilgrimage in mission.

Samuel Escobar, a lifelong friend and associate, puts Andrew's considerable contribution to the church in Latin America into the historical context of the development of evangelical missiology in the continent. In so doing he offers some important perspectives on the theological ferment in Latin America and the way in which evangelical convictions were forged out of that context. This chapter is an important summary and commentary on this period of Latin American evangelical history.

⁵ J. Andrew Kirk and Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *To Stake a Claim: Mission and the Western Crisis of Knowledge* (New York: Orbis, 1999).

⁶ J. Andrew Kirk, *Civilisations in Conflict? Islam, the West and Christian Faith* (Oxford: Regnum International, 2011).

Part II: What is Mission?

Andrew made a significant contribution to Latin American evangelical theology through his association with René Padilla and Samuel Escobar when he was instrumental in the formation of the Latin American Theological Fraternity as well as in the establishing of the Kairos Centre in Buenos Aires in the 1970s. In this period Andrew taught and wrote about revolutionary politics, liberation theology and the importance of contextualisation. He helped many evangelicals to develop a biblical approach to contextualisation. He has maintained his interest and involvement in Latin America, travelling and teaching regularly. Out of his experience in Latin America came a strong commitment to holistic or integral mission, seeking to apply gospel principles to issues of social justice. In this way he made a significant contribution to the restoration of social justice to the evangelical mission agenda in the 1980s and 1990s.

René Padilla acknowledges this in his chapter and makes a compelling case for his own approach to a contextual and integral mission. This holistic approach has been strengthened in recent years as Andrew has added to it a commitment to environmental issues, conflict and reconciliation, inter-faith relations, and the gospel engagement with culture.

René's chapter sets the scene well for an in-depth discussion of the hermeneutics of liberation theology from John Corrie. John is picking up Andrew's suggestion of an 'alternative hermeneutic' which, it is argued, could form the basis of an evangelical liberation theology both faithful to scripture and fully engaged with the context of poverty and injustice. Liberation theology may be seen to be in decline in recent years and therefore may be considered something of an anachronism, but it established important and abiding principles which John believes must be taken seriously by evangelicals who are committed to mission as contextualisation. Andrew was a sympathetic critic of Liberation Theology and it is in that spirit that John seeks to re-energise the tradition of evangelical social justice with an approach that holds both orthodoxy and orthopraxis in creative tension.

If Liberation Theology takes seriously the theme of mission in the context of community then Peter Penner's contribution complements the previous chapters with a scholarly exegesis and exposition of the summary texts in Acts and what they have to teach us for our own ecclesiology. This is inspired by Andrew's commitment to the biblical text as intrinsically missional and by his view of the church as a community of the Kingdom called to make disciples who love one another. The idea of a 'community of shared goods' challenges our Western individualism, but 'missional communities' are springing up in the West attempting to revive this tradition and offer the world a counter-cultural model of a shared commitment to social transformation. Peter's detailed discussion of the elements of early church community life and the 'praxis of integrated fellowship' offers important insights to this movement.

From the very different context and perspective of Southeast Asia Hwa Yung discusses the ways in which evangelicals there can contribute to the important

task of nation building with all its socio-political challenges. We hear much about rapid evangelical growth in many parts of the 'Majority World' and yet too often the impact of that growth on the social and political structures of the nations is minimal, so that revival and personal conversion do not result in mission as social transformation. Hwa Yung sets out some of the elements of an evangelical approach to nation building, including the maintaining of a faithful moral compass and the refusal to be drawn into ethnic conflict based on tribal loyalties. Freedom, equality and human rights are rooted in a long tradition of christian principles and he argues that evangelicals in the Majority World need to listen to the history of the development of these ideas which will give them resources to engage with non-christian thinkers in working together on new ways of thinking about politics and government.

Part III: Truth in a Pluralistic World

Andrew has travelled and taught within Eastern Europe for many years, so it is good to have two contributions from that part of the world. In the first Parush Parushev identifies the challenges to epistemology and the justification of truth claims presented by the rationalism and secularism of post-Enlightenment cultures, a theme which Andrew has returned to time and again. Parush engages profoundly with Andrew's recent thinking, especially as it sets out what he calls a 'moderate foundationalism'. Beginning from an exploration of the differences between epistemological and experiential foundationalism, and how they might be held together, Parush discusses the possibilities of a non-foundationalist epistemology rooted in a constructive postmodern critique of the absolutism and reductionism of the modern project. His preference is for a convictional perspectivism that can avoid the charge of relativism by being rooted in a tradition of shared narratives which are communally owned. This is an important critique of Andrew's approach which at the same time is a creative contribution to the debate about foundationalism.

It is a testimony to Andrew's international significance that there are missiologists in different parts of the world who recognise his influence upon their thinking. Vinoth Ramachandra from Sri Lanka gives us a typically rigorous and trenchant discussion of religious pluralism which argues that we need to move beyond mere tolerance of difference to a much more engaged and mutually critical pluralism in the public sphere. He identifies strongly with Andrew's critique of institutional religion and advances 10 theses on religious pluralism which suggest a framework for a new approach to christian engagement with plurality. This recognises and affirms cultural and religious diversity, and encourages a critical and self-critical dialogue which does not avoid conflict by simply opting for the middle ground in the interests of peace.

The differences between cultural and religious plurality explored by Vinoth and the possibilities of meaningful dialogue are recognised in Darrell Jackson's

contribution on the relationship between intercultural and interreligious dialogue. He locates the discussion in the framework of the policies of the European Union and the Council of Europe, which tend to see religion as an aspect of culture and therefore try to subsume it within intercultural dialogue. European politicians struggle to define the relationship between culture and religion and seem to have viewed intercultural dialogue as a smokescreen for interreligious dialogue and therefore tend to resist it. If they were willing they might learn something from the Conference of European Churches with their five decades of experience of dialogue, but Darrell's detailed account underlines the frustrations for the church of being recognised as a legitimate dialogue partner. Darrell then brings Andrew into the discussion with his perspectives on interreligious and intercultural dialogue. The conversation explores the possibilities of meaningful dialogue with secularism, in which the church may need to recognise that it is participating from the social and cultural margins. But the alternative is that genuine intercultural dialogue may wither and die, thereby depriving Europe of the possibility of constructing a more comprehensive identity.

Finally in this section Andrew Walls offers a typically insightful contribution on the influence of worldview on christian conversion. He challenges us to recognise that there is no such thing as a single christian worldview, since worldviews are constructed in each context as complex 'maps' of reality incorporating many different elements. The Enlightenment of course was critical in the development of Western christian worldviews, and greatly influenced the preaching of missionaries to Africa and Asia. But these contexts have much bigger maps, reflecting larger, more populated universes; so what happens when a person in these contexts becomes a christian? And what happens to theology when it interacts with Majority World cultures that throw up new issues and frontiers for theology? Andrew's hope is that christian worldviews with open frontiers will give jaded theological activity new vision, especially in relation to the whole question of the nature of evil.

Part IV: Culture, Education and Religion

The breadth of Andrew Kirk's influence is illustrated well in this fourth part of the book, which brings together a range of concerns with overlapping themes. The relationship between Gospel and Culture is never far away, and Wilbert Shenk offers a fascinating historical survey of the attempts to develop a missiology of Western culture in which both Wilbert and Andrew have played significant roles. The Gospel and our Culture programme, inspired by Lesslie Newbigin, saw the West as the new mission field with the imperative of a meaningful missionary encounter with Western culture. The history of attempts at sustainable development of this initiative is salutary, for despite significant academic and missiological contributions, and many fruitful consultations and publications, it was difficult to sustain the momentum of the project and realise the original optimistic goals of its